



## CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

October 5, 2000

### **H.R. 2941**

#### **A bill to establish the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area in the state of Arizona**

*As reported by the House Committee on Resources on October 4, 2000*

CBO estimates that H.R. 2941 would have no significant impact on the federal budget. The bill could affect direct spending (including offsetting receipts); therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply, but we estimate that any such impacts would be less than \$500,000 in any given year.

H.R. 2941 would establish the Sonoita Valley Conservation Planning District on 136,900 acres of land in Arizona. The bill would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish and operate an advisory council for 10 years to assist the Secretary in managing public lands within the proposed district. Within the district, H.R. 2941 also would establish the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area on 42,000 acres of federal lands and would specify requirements for managing those lands. The bill would direct the Secretary to prepare a management plan for the area and would authorize the Secretary to acquire, through purchase or exchange, nonfederal lands within its boundaries. Subject to valid existing rights, H.R. 2941 would withdraw federal lands within the conservation area from mining and from mineral and geothermal leasing and development. Finally, H.R. 2941 would require the Secretary to report to the Congress on activities within the proposed planning district and conservation area.

Based on information from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), CBO estimates that implementing this legislation would cost about \$500,000 annually, assuming appropriation of the necessary sums. That estimate includes the estimated costs of establishing and managing the proposed district and conservation area, operating the advisory council, updating an existing management plan, and preparing the required reports.

Withdrawing lands within the proposed conservation area from mining and from mineral and geothermal leasing and development could result in forgone offsetting receipts from those lands if, under current law, the land would generate receipts from those activities. According to BLM, however, those lands currently generate no significant receipts from such activities,

and the agency does not expect them to generate significant receipts over the next 10 years. CBO estimates that any forgone receipts that might result under this provision would total less than \$500,000 a year.

H.R. 2941 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA). Any significant costs incurred by state, local, or tribal governments would result from voluntary decisions to participate in managing the areas affected by this bill.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Megan Carroll. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.